



**SEA KAYAKING in BAHIA de LOS ANGELES, BAJA CALIFORNIA**  
**with WILDERNESS CABIN RETREAT STAY**  
**Saturday – Friday, May 26 – June 1, 2007**  
**Cost: \$995**

**WELCOME!** Thank you for your interest in this seven-day adventure that takes place in a remote and spectacular marine desert environment approximately 400 miles down the Baja Peninsula. We pride ourselves on offering the best sea kayak trips to this area and can boast of many years of experience leading first time kayakers. We are committed to small group trips that are safe and have a friendly atmosphere. The information that follows will give you a clear picture of the type of adventure you can expect. We hope you will join us.

**DESCRIPTION:** This eight day adventure takes place in a remote and spectacular marine desert environment approximately 400 miles down the Baja California Peninsula. Aztec Adventures takes pride in offering the best sea kayak trips to this area and can boast of many years of experience leading first time kayakers. We are committed to small group trips that are safe and have a friendly atmosphere. Eight adults plus two leaders travel together in one 15-passenger van. to Bahia de Los Angeles (Bay of LA), a small fishing village located on the Gulf of California, the east side of the Baja California Peninsula. The setting is a sparkling bay dotted with more than a dozen uninhabited islands and a pristine coastline running for hundreds of miles both north and south. This area has been called the poor man's Galapagos, due to the abundance of many endemic species. Residents of this area include unique marine sea birds such as Magnificent Frigate Birds, Blue-Footed Boobys, Heerman's Gulls, and Elegant Terns. Observational trophies on past trips have included Finback, Humpback, & Gray Whales, Orcas, Common & Bottlenose Dolphins, Manta Rays, and Whale Sharks.

At this time of year you can expect very warm days, refreshing water for swimming and cool nights for sleeping. Our itinerary is geared for first-time paddlers, but all experience levels will enjoy the beauty and solitude of this trip. We offer the use of both double and single sea kayaks and the opportunity to paddle both. This trip is targeted for first time kayakers and visitors. Our goal is to make your stay as comfortable as possible by providing you with rustic cabin lodging, exquisite meals and the opportunity to paddle sea kayaks, snorkel, fish, hike and relax in an amazing location.

Plan on observing a lot of native flora and fauna whether it is hundreds of small tide pool organisms, sea and shore birds, sea mammals or the amazing desert plant life and cactus that abound. We make time each day to snorkel, fish, day hike, and of course relax and enjoy this amazing natural area.

**WEATHER:** "Plan for the worst, expect the best." Warm days, breezy afternoons, cool nights, and plenty of sunshine is the norm. It would be rare to experience rain. Expect temperatures as high as the 100's and as low as the 60's. The biggest factor to contend with is the wind. It is possible that we could be "campsite bound" for several days at a time because of rough seas caused by high winds.

**INCLUDED IN THE PRICE:** The fee of \$995.00 includes, two professional outdoor leaders, all lodging and permit fees, round-trip transportation via air conditioned 15-passenger van, 17 meals (6 breakfasts, 6 lunches & 5 dinners/desserts), complete outfitting of all kayak and personal gear, first and last nights' lodging in town. Please read our cancellation policies carefully before registering.

**NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE:** Your personal expenses will include approximately four meals on the road or in town, favorite snacks and any desired gifts. We suggest approximately \$150.

**CANCELLATION POLICY: PLEASE READ BEFORE REGISTERING FOR AN OUTING**

1. *If you cancel from this outing twenty (20) working days (M-F) prior to the pre-trip meeting, you are entitled to a refund less a twenty-five percent (25%) handling fee or a credit voucher good for the full amount which can be used toward another outing. Credit vouchers are valid through the end of the academic year. Note: transferring from one trip to another constitutes a cancellation and must be done within the aforementioned deadline to avoid loss of fee.*
2. *If you must cancel from an outing after the aforementioned deadline (above), you may receive a refund (less a 25% handling fee) or a credit voucher good for the full amount **ONLY IF WE CAN FILL YOUR VACATED SPOT**. Please note that all other spaces must be filled before we can fill your space. If we are unable to fill your vacated spot, you will not be entitled to a credit voucher or refund. **NO EXCEPTIONS**.*
3. *Sometimes, we must cancel an outing due to low enrollment. In such a situation, we try to contact enrolled participants either by the Monday prior to the outing or the day of the pre-trip meeting. Enrolled participants will be eligible for a full refund or credit voucher.*
4. *In the event of cancellation due to unforeseeable circumstances on the part of Aztec Adventures or County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation (bad weather, natural disaster, or instructor illness for example), we will make every attempt to reschedule the outing or issue a full refund or credit voucher.*

**YOUR TRIP LEADERS:** The two leaders guiding this trip have extensive sea kayak “know-how” in Bahia de Los Angeles. They also have many years’ experience traveling and adventuring throughout Baja California and all over our country and have led trips well beyond the scope and challenge of this one. They look forward to sharing a wonderful sea kayaking adventure with a small group of enthusiastic trip members.

**GRATUITIES:** If you feel your trip leaders have done a good job, a monetary gratuity is always appreciated, but in no way required.

**RISKS/HAZARDS/SAFETY:** Wind is always our biggest concern. High winds can impede our progress and make even camping difficult. This area is known for both its pristine and calm waters, but at times, also its fierce winds that can cause dangerous conditions to present themselves in a matter of minutes. Mornings are typically calm offering ideal paddling conditions, while afternoons usually present us with windy conditions that can run the full range from strenuous paddling to dangerous conditions. This means we may rise early before the sun, have quick breakfasts, and hit the water with time in the afternoon for snorkeling, siestas, fishing, reading, and hiking. Getting up early, some days, may be non-negotiable.

The marine-desert environment is unique, providing us with all kinds of opportunities to be bitten, stung, stuck, burned, etc. Protecting yourself from the sun is encouraged if not mandatory. There are Sting rays in the warm shallows, rattle snakes and scorpions in the shade or under rocks, and cactus all around—following safety protocols established by your trip leaders will help you protect yourself from these inherent risks. Also, paddling a sea kayak can be hard work at times—plan on working some muscles that may not get used much.

Practically speaking, the nearest medical facilities are here in San Diego—400 miles away. The only realistic way to get back to San Diego is to drive or possibly fly. Everyone on this trip must make a conscious effort at all times to be safe. One person’s disdain for safety will result in more hardship for the whole group. If we do have an accident or injury that requires medical attention beyond the scope of our leaders’ experience, the trip is immediately over without refund. Our leaders are certified Wilderness First Responders which means they are trained to administer first aid in this type of “delayed transport” environment. However, while they can treat injuries—they cannot always prevent them. Lastly we do our best to stay in communication with our contacts in town via VHF radio and we also carry a satellite phone for extreme emergencies.

**OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION:** Please commit to being a contributing member of a group of 10. We expect that you will be in good physical condition and health, able to paddle upwards of three hours at a time, and be comfortable sleeping in a rustic cabin. We will enjoy meals together and divide equally all necessary tasks, such as carrying gear and kayaks and cleaning them at the end of the trip. **NO DRUGS!** The penalty for possession of illegal drugs in Mexico is severe. Alcohol consumption is also prohibited in both the vans and while in the field. If you care to enjoy a libation with dinner, we hope you will be respectful and considerate of others that do not feel it necessary to drink. Also, we ask that you partake very conservatively so as not to be a safety risk—the leaders reserve the right to enforce safety at their discretion.

**CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT:** Each participant must bring only the bare essentials or what is printed on the equipment list. Please limit yourself to one duffel bag to transport all your gear by van. Once we reach our destination, you will transfer your gear into “dry bags”. These dry bags will be provided by Aztec Adventures and are designed to fit in your kayak and keep your gear dry. Your travel clothes and other valuables will be safely locked up at our storage facility.

**HEALTH/PHYSICAL CONDITIONING:** Paddling can be strenuous and uncomfortable at times. You’re sitting for long periods of time, maintaining a constant pace with only short breaks and without the opportunity to use a toilet or stretch out your legs. We will be paddling 3 to 10 miles a day, which with proper instruction and technique should be a good workout, but manageable. Keeping yourself well hydrated, fueled up, and protected from the sun and wind is essential and will help keep your energy level high. It has been our observation that large people (240+ pounds) struggle greatly with the confined space of a kayak. Leg and foot cramps, back aches, etc. have all been common occurrences on our extended kayaking trips both in Alaska and Baja California.

**FOOD/COOKING:** We love to eat on the road in Baja California – the food is good and it makes sense to support the local people and economy of the communities through which we travel. Most all of the food we will provide will be purchased or obtained locally such as fresh tortillas, fruits, vegetables. We hope you like seafood as our intention is to serve it for dinner as much as possible. Plan on this aspect of the trip being one of the most rewarding. We hope you will be amazed (as many of our trip members have been) by some of the delicious dishes we will prepare.

**LODGING:** Our first and last night, in the town of Bahia de Los Angeles, will be spent at “Casa Azul,” our kayak storage house/facility. We have two bathrooms and showers, a simple kitchen, and plenty of deck and patio space for sleeping on our comfortable cots. Our Wilderness Retreat, located 12 miles south along the uninhabited coastline offers simple cabins with double occupancy, flush toilet, and solar shower. There is also a large palapa (shaded patio) that we will use for dining and relaxing with an attached kitchen. However, please be prepared to live in the elements for the duration of the trip as we will need to conserve our fresh water supply and not rely on electricity.

**STEWARDSHIP:** It is always important to the Aztec Adventures program to minimize our impact on the natural environment and resources from which we derive so much enjoyment and knowledge. We will require that everyone pack out all of their trash. Included in your confirmation packet will be a handout on specific minimum impact essentials. It is also very important for the Aztec Adventures Outdoor Program to strive to give something back to the places and communities from which we derive so much reward. Whenever we visit the small community of Bahia de Los Angeles, we bring used household items and clothing, especially children’s clothing. Many of the local people struggle economically and a generous donation of clothing is always appreciated. We hope you will join us in going through your closet for items that you no longer wear or use and bring them with you.

**SEA KAYAK COMFORT LEVEL, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:** If you have never paddled a decked sea kayak, we urge you to try it before committing to this trip. We highly recommend the Mission Bay Aquatic Center (858) 488-1036. They offer excellent instruction and a great price. We will be paddling fully loaded decked sea kayaks in open water. This is very different from paddling a “sit-on-top” kayak which is much more stable and easier to re-enter in the event of a capsize. Our leaders need everyone to feel comfortable performing wet exits and assisted recoveries. If a capsize occurs in rough or windy conditions, each of us needs to know exactly what to do for the safety of our group. With this in mind, we have planned for the first morning on the water to be a hands-on sea kayak safety skills lesson. Even if you feel you are adequately (or even over-qualified) in terms of sea kayaking, we require your active participation so that we are all on the same page once the trip begins and so that our leaders can also feel comfortable with your abilities. Additionally, we will welcome your assistance and tips in helping those less experienced to gain knowledge and vital skills. The topics to be covered include: Fitting your kayak, wet exits and recoveries; Knowledge of your sea kayak and related equipment; Paddling techniques; Group paddling safety strategies.

## ITINERARY

**PRE-TRIP MEETING:** A required pre-trip meeting will be held **Thursday May 17, 2007 at 7:00pm** at a County of San Diego Department of Parks & Recreation facility TBD.

### DAY 1

Meet at SDSU at 5:30am. Depart at 6:00am. Make stops in Tijuana, Ensenada, San Quintin, El Rosario, & Catavina for rest breaks, gas and meals. Arrive Bay of L.A. approx. 5:00pm. Eat dinner at local restaurant in town and enjoy the comforts of Casa Azul (our rustic rental house and kayak storage facility—includes toilets, shower, kitchen and plenty of patio space for sleeping on cots!)

### DAY 2

Load our gear into the 25 foot pangas (fishing boats) for an early morning ride to the La Unica Wilderness Cabins. After breakfast and cabin move-in begin the kayak safety orientation & paddling instruction. Wet exits, assisted and unassisted recoveries. Fitting the kayak: foot peg and seat adjustments. Forward stroke, sweep & other turning strokes, bracing, use of rudder. Entering, exiting and launching kayaks from shore. Carrying and care of kayaks. Paddling formation and communication on water. All meals will be taken at La Unica. After dinner enjoy a special presentation of the Cultural History of Baja California.

### DAY 3

Early morning, weather permitting, paddle north to 2 hours to Bahia Quemado-taking several breaks along the way. Enjoy a day hike to Puerto Don Juan learning about the endemic flora and cactus of the area with time built in for (snorkeling, clamming, swimming and lunch).

### DAYS 4—6

Depending on weather:

- Paddle south to Isla Racita (two hours) to observe sea lions and sea birds.
- Paddle to the Punta Pescador for a relaxing day of snorkeling, fishing, sun bathing and hiking.
- For an additional cost spend the day with a local guide fishing around the islands to the north for big yellowtail and grouper.
- Continue to work on kayak skills such as learning the Eskimo Roll and more advanced paddling strokes and techniques.

### DAY 7

Optional early morning paddle. Pack up after lunch and return to Casa Azul in town. Clean up all kayak gear, shower and enjoy our last evening in town. Visit museum and have dinner in one of the local restaurants.

### DAY 8

On the road early (6:00am) making good time to El Rosario for breakfast/brunch. Continue making good time to Ensenada arriving in early afternoon for lunch (or not). Arrive back at SDSU in early evening or just in time for rush hour.

## PERSONAL EQUIPMENT THAT AZTEC ADVENTURES WILL PROVIDE:

- ☐ 50° Rectangular Summer Sleeping Bag w/cotton sheets
- ☐ Ensolite Pad or Thermarest Sleeping Pad
- ☐ Camp Chair
- ☐ Coffee Mug, Cup, Bowl, Fork & Spoon
- ☐ Dry Bags (4) for storing all of your gear in your kayak.
- ☐ Deck Bag for storing your sunscreen, snacks, water, paddling jacket, etc., for easy access while paddling
- ☐ Paddling Jacket - for keeping the wind and water spray off your upper body.
- ☐ Wetsuit: Aztec Adventures has 3/2mm “farmer john” wetsuits that are perfect for snorkeling during fall, spring or early summer in Bay of L.A.
- ☐ Snorkel and masks: we have a limited number, please bring your own if you are an avid snorkeler.

## **EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING LIST**

### **CLOTHING:**

- ☐ Shade Hat – side brimmed is best. Baseball cap with bandanna covering the back of your head and neck will work in a pinch.
- ☐ Cotton T-shirt/shirt – cotton is wonderful to put on after a long day of paddling. Keep a shirt designated only for “camp” to avoid the saltwater chafe.
- ☐ Cotton bed sheet—This is wonderful on warm evenings when a sleeping bag may be too much
- ☐ Wind Breaker or Nylon Shell.
- ☐ Wool Sweater or Fleece Jacket/Pullover – great for in camp or if conditions get cold.
- ☐ Nylon shorts: better than cotton because it dries quickly.
- ☐ Cotton Sweat Pants: nice to have in camp for the cool evenings.
- ☐ Bathing Suit
- ☐ Underwear
- ☐ Sport sandals: The terrain around camp is very rugged. In warmer weather sport sandals are nice to wear all the time.
- ☐ Hiking Shoes/Tennis Shoes: Essential for day hikes.
- ☐ Hiking Socks: Wool or Wool/Nylon blend.

### **PERSONAL EQUIPMENT:**

- ☐ Sunscreen, Chapstick & Hand Lotion: The combination of dry desert air and salt water will leave you with lizard skin!
- ☐ Sunglasses w/retainer strap: The sun can be extremely bright at times. A good pair that offers UV protection w/polarized lenses is recommended.
- ☐ Towel & Toiletries: Bring what you need to feel comfortable. Fresh water will be at a premium, so bathing will be limited (we’re big fans of baby wipes).
- ☐ Ziploc Bags (6) & Heavy Trash Compactor (2) come in very handy throughout the trip for numerous uses. Such as for personal garbage, wet gear, etc.
- ☐ One-Quart Water Bottles: Bring a minimum of two. Water is your lifeline in the desert environment. Nalgene and Gatorade bottles are excellent because they will withstand someone stepping on them.
- ☐ Water Bags/Hydration-Hose Systems: These are wonderful when paddling because they allow hands free access. However, we have witnessed the local Ravens pecking holes in them—do not leave them lying around!
- ☐ Flashlight or Headlamp with spare bulb and batteries.
- ☐ Snack Food: Our motto is “Lunch begins right after breakfast”. Please keep your energy and calorie level high all day!
- ☐ Camera & Film (waterproof disposable cameras work great)
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Wristwatch-waterproof
- ☐ Pillow for van ride
- ☐ Entertainment (cards, travel games, book, etc)

### **GROUP EQUIPMENT THAT AZTEC ADVENTURES WILL PROVIDE:**

- ☐ Expedition First Aid Kit, Kayak Repair kits, VHF Radio, Satellite Phone and two-way radio, Kayaks, paddles, spray skirts, and all related safety gear
- ☐ Stoves, fuels and all cooking gear, 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 5 dinners, 5 desserts for 10 people, Water Bags-totaling over one gallon per person per day